

Introduction

This collection of ballot measure background materials and resources was selected and created by the LegiSchool Project for the MyVote California 2008 High School Mock Presidential Primary Election. As sponsors of the MyVote project, Secretary of State Debra Bowen and Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell expressly chose these measures to give students an opportunity to make their voices heard on public policy questions of importance to them, including global warming, voter turnout in elections and free speech in the age of technology.

The LegiSchool Project's mission is to engage California high school students in matters of public policy and state government by creating opportunities for students and state leaders to meet and share ideas on the issues affecting California. In doing so, we hope to motivate young people to take an interest in the public life around them and to encourage their active participation in our political process.

Mock elections are especially useful tools to help teachers make public policy and democracy come alive for young people. We hope you find this material useful in stirring classroom discussion and helping your students become interested and informed voters.

Using the Resource Materials

Here are a few ideas on how to use these resources to make your students' mock election voting a rewarding experience:

- **Class Discussion:** Whether teachers use these materials to prepare their own lesson plans or share them with their students, the topic background, pros and cons and key terms can be the spark for a lively classroom discussion.
- **Homework Assignment:** Provide students with the background information and at least two articles from the resource links to discuss the pros and cons of each ballot measure. Ask the students to write a short essay outlining their reasons for supporting or opposing each one. Encourage them to discuss the ballot measures with their friends and family members, to hear what people of various ages and points of view have to say about them.
- **Classroom Debate:** Divide students into small groups and assign each group a support or oppose position on one or all of the ballot measures. Provide them with information from the background section, plus at least two of the resources (links to articles and related websites) they can use to develop their arguments on the ballot measure position(s) they are assigned to present in the debate.

To find out how to attend a LegiSchool Town Hall Meeting, participate in student contests, or to order FREE curriculum, please visit www.csus.edu/legischool.

